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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PINR](#) [ICTY](#) [SR](#) [YI](#) [EZ](#)
SUBJECT: CZECHS REQUEST CLARIFICATION OF U.S. POSITION ON
SERBIAN ICTY COMPLIANCE

REF: STATE 146343

Classified By: Political Economic Counselor Michael Dodman for reasons
1.4 (b) and (d)

11. (U) This is an action request for the Department. Please
see paragraph 9.

12. (C) Summary: The Czech Government is hesitant to use its
upcoming meetings with Serbia to deliver a tough message on
ICTY compliance because it is hearing mixed messages on how
significant ICTY compliance will be in the near future. They
have heard that NATO PFP status is under consideration
without emphasis on ICTY compliance. The Czechs have
requested clarification about U.S. attitudes towards
near-term outreach towards the Serbs and the degree to which
ICTY compliance will play a role. End summary.

13. (C) Poloff delivered reftel talking points on Serbia's
ICTY cooperation to MFA Director for South Eastern and
Eastern Europe Thomas Szunyog on September 8. Other topics
included the September 7 signing of a status of forces
agreement (SOFA) between the U.S. and Serbia.

14. (C) Szunyog responded that he was having difficulty in
determining how hard to push the Serbs on ICTY compliance. He
said he had received mixed messages from American
interlocutors in the region and also at NATO, who had
indicated a breakthrough could soon be announced. Szunyog
outlined his fear that the Czech Republic would use a planned
September 14th meeting with FM Vuk Draskovic to push the
Serbs hard on cooperating with ICTY, only to see the Serbs
win major concessions from the international community
without achieving the level of ICTY compliance that was being
demanded.

15. (C) Elaborating, Szunyog said he had heard that there was
a possibility of a NATO announcement during September that
would be a step towards PFP status for Serbia. Such an
announcement would not be contingent on the concrete results
mentioned in the reftel demarche and the handover of Mladic
to ICTY would not be a precondition.

16. (C) Moving to the EU, Szunyog commented that any disunity
between the EU and NATO on the appropriate level of
engagement with Serbia undermined the message. He said that
the position of the EU Troika could move towards restarting
the Stabilization and Association Agreement talks in October
if ICTY Prosecutor Carla Del Ponte were to make an
announcement endorsing the Serbian "Action Plan for ICTY
cooperation." However, Szunyog said his contacts indicated
that a Del Ponte statement would not be forthcoming without
effective implementation steps from the Serbs. Such a
statement would also have to come quickly if it were to
affect the outcome of the upcoming September 29 EU

Troika-Serbia meeting. The Czechs and the EU itself would require at a minimum a clear political statement from PM Kostunice calling for the immediate arrest of Mladic, followed by concrete acts to bring this about.

¶17. (C) Szunyog said a Regional Partnership consisting of Austria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia would meet with FM Draskovic in Vienna on September ¶14. The preparatory work for that meeting indicated that this group would not drastically diverge from the EU line, and would examine practical steps such as waivers on visa fees for young Serbs.

¶18. (C) Szunyog also reiterated the Czech objective of becoming the NATO contact point Embassy in Belgrade, promising they would bring appropriate expertise won during the process of the Czechs' own military reforms.

¶19. (C) Comment and action request: In addition to the Regional Partnership session, the Czechs are considering a bilateral meeting with the Serbs on September 14, and could deliver a reinforcing message on the need for concrete action on ICTY. However, Szunyog said the Czechs could not do this if they would be running the risk of being embarrassed by the announcement of major concessions to Serbia without the prerequisite compliance with ICTY. Post requests clarification to pass to the Czech Government on the envisaged degree of cooperation with Serbia in the coming weeks and months, including any planned NATO outreach to Belgrade. End comment and action request.
CABANISS